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Report of the technical review of the first biennial report of Slovakia

Developed country Parties are requested, in accordance with decision 2/CP.17, to submit their first biennial report to the secretariat by 1 January 2014. This report presents the results of the technical review of the first biennial report of Slovakia conducted by an expert review team in accordance with the "Guidelines for the technical review of information reported under the Convention related to greenhouse gas inventories, biennial reports and national communications by Parties included in Annex I to the Convention".

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I. Introduction and summary

A. Introduction

1. For Slovakia, the Convention entered into force on 23 November 1994. Under the Convention, Slovakia made a commitment to reduce its greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 20 per cent by 2020 below the 1990 level.

2. This report covers the centralized technical review of the first biennial report (BR1) of Slovakia, coordinated by the secretariat, in accordance with the "Guidelines for the technical review of information reported under the Convention related to greenhouse gas inventories, biennial reports and national communications by Parties included in Annex I to the Convention" (decision 23/CP.19).

3. The review took place from 5 to 10 May 2014 in Bonn, Germany, and was conducted by the following team of nominated experts from the UNFCCC roster of experts: Ms. Eglantina Bruci (Albania), Mr. Øyvind Christophersen (Norway), Mr. Sorin Deaconu (Romania), Mr. Robert Jeszke (Poland), Mr. Bundit Limmeechokchai (Thailand), Ms. Jenny Mager (Chile), Mr. Erick Masafu (Kenya), Mr. Alexander Storch (Austria), Mr. Daniel Tutu Benefoh (Ghana), Mr. Goran Vukmir (Bosnia and Herzegovina) and Mr. Pavel Zamyslicky (Czech Republic). Ms. Janowska and Mr. Tutu Benefoh were the lead reviewers. The review was coordinated by Mr. Matthew Dudley and Ms. Barbara Muik (secretariat).

4. During the review, the expert review team (ERT) examined each section of the BR1.

5. In accordance with decision 23/CP.19, a draft version of this report was communicated to the Government of Slovakia, which provided comments that were considered and incorporated, as appropriate, into this final version of the report.

B. Summary

6. The ERT conducted a technical review of the information reported in the BR1 of Slovakia according to the "UNFCCC biennial reporting guidelines for developed country Parties" (hereinafter referred to as the UNFCCC reporting guidelines on BRs).

1. Completeness and transparency of reporting

7. Gaps and issues related to the reported information identified by the ERT are presented in table 1 below.

2. Timeliness

8. The BR1 was submitted on 2 January 2014, shortly after the deadline of 1 January 2014 mandated by decision 2/CP.17. The common tabular format (CTF) tables were submitted on 22 January 2014. The ERT noted the delay in the submission of the BR1 and recommends that Slovakia endeavour to submit its next national communication on the due date.

3. Adherence to the reporting guidelines

9. The information reported by Slovakia in its BR1 is mostly in adherence to the UNFCCC reporting guidelines on BRs as per decision 2/CP.17 (see table 1).

Table 1
Summary of completeness and transparency of reported information in the first biennial report of Slovakia[a]

Sections of the biennial report	*Completeness*	*Transparency*	*Reference to paragraphs*
Greenhouse gas emissions and trends	Complete	Transparent	
Assumptions, conditions and methodologies related to the attainment of the quantified economy-wide emission reduction target	Complete	Transparent	
Progress in achievement of targets	Mostly complete	Mostly transparent	19, 21, 23
Projections	Complete	Transparent	
Provision of support to developing country Parties[b]	NA	NA	

Abbreviation: NA = not applicable.

[a] A list of recommendations pertaining to the completeness and transparency issues identified in this table is included in the chapter on conclusions and recommendations.

[b] Slovakia is not a Party included in Annex II to the Convention and is therefore not obliged to report information on provision of support to developing country Parties.

II. Technical review of the reported information

A. All greenhouse gas emissions and removals related to the quantified economy-wide emission reduction target

10. Slovakia has provided a summary of information on GHG emission trends for the period 1990–2011. This information is consistent with the 2013 national GHG inventory submission.

11. Total GHG emissions[1] excluding emissions and removals from land use, land-use change and forestry (LULUCF) decreased by 36.9 per cent between the base year and 2011. A decrease in industrial output and structural changes in the economy has influenced energy and industrial processes emissions, and reduced cattle numbers and improved agriculture management practices are key to the agriculture emission trend. Further information on the review of emissions and emission trends is provided in chapter II.A of the report of the technical review of the sixth national communication (IDR/NC6).[2]

B. Assumptions, conditions and methodologies related to the attainment of the quantified economy-wide emission reduction target

12. Under the Convention, Slovakia contributes to the EU's quantified economy-wide target to achieve a 20 per cent reduction of emissions by 2020 compared with the 1990 base year level. The target for the EU and its member States is formalized in the EU's climate and energy package legislation. This includes the European Union Emissions Trading

[1] In this report, the term "total GHG emissions" refers to the aggregated national GHG emissions expressed in terms of carbon dioxide equivalent excluding land use, land-use change and forestry, unless otherwise specified.

[2] FCCC/IDR.6/SVK.

System (EU ETS) and the EU effort-sharing decision (ESD). This legislative package regulates the emissions of carbon dioxide (CO_2), methane (CH_4), nitrous oxide (N_2O), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), sulphur hexafluoride (SF_6) and nitrogen trifluoride (NF_3) using global warming potential (GWP) values from the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) to aggregate EU GHG emissions up to 2020.

13. The regulation of the emissions covered by the EU ETS entered into force on 1 January 2005, and the new period started in 2013 based on a yearly reduction equal to 1.74 per cent of the average allocation in the period 2008–2012, extrapolated starting in 2010, leading to a 21 per cent GHG emissions reduction by 2020 compared with the 2005 level. Emissions of sectors not covered by the EU ETS are regulated by member State specific targets starting in 2013, based on average emissions from 2008 to 2010, which leads to a collective reduction by all the member States of about 10 per cent by 2020 compared with 2005 at the EU level. In accordance with the EU ESD, the country-specific target for Slovakia is to limit emission growth to +13 per cent above the 2005 level by 2020.

14. The EU also made an offer to move to a 30 per cent reduction conditional on other developed countries committing to a comparable target and developing countries contributing adequately under a new global climate change agreement.

15. In its BR1 and CTF table 2, Slovakia reported a description of its target referred to in paragraph 12 above, including associated conditions and assumptions. In line with the EU approach to its target, Slovakia does not include emissions or removals from the LULUCF sector in defining its quantified economy-wide target. In CTF table 2(b), the base year for HFCs, PFCs, SF_6 and NF_3 is reported as 1990. The ERT noted that the base year for the joint EU economy-wide emission reduction target is 1990 for all gases excluding NF_3.

16. The ERT noted some inconsistencies within the reported elements, for example in biennial report (BR) CTF table 2(c), as reported using the BR CTF software, the reference for the GWP values is given as the Second Assessment Report of the IPCC), while in table 2 in annex 2 to the Party's sixth national communication (NC6) the reference is given as the IPCC Fourth Assessment Report. In response to a question raised by the ERT during the review, Slovakia clarified that the correct reference is to the IPCC Fourth Assessment Report. The ERT encourages Slovakia to ensure the consistency of the information within its next biennial report and between its biennial report and national communication.

C. Progress made towards the achievement of the quantified economy-wide emission reduction target

17. In its BR1, Slovakia reported information on its mitigation actions implemented and planned since its fifth national communication (NC5) to achieve its target. Slovakia also reported on the use of units from market-based mechanisms and LULUCF to achieve its target.

18. The BR1 does not include some information required by the UNFCCC reporting guidelines on BRs, namely on the organization of the reporting of mitigation actions by sector and by gas. In the BR1, policies and measures (PaMs) in the transport sector are reported under the energy sector; however, the separation is reflected in BR CTF table 3. The ERT noted some inconsistencies, such as that in its BR1 Slovakia has reported on its Rural Development Programme for 2014–2020, but in BR CTF table 3 it did not report on any PaMs regarding forestry.

19. During the review, Slovakia provided additional information, elaborating on the recognition of the transport sector within the joint reporting on the energy and transport

sectors. To improve transparency, the ERT recommends that Slovakia present information on energy and transport separately.

20. The ERT reviewed the reported information and provided its assessment of progress made towards achieving the target. The ERT noted progress made by Slovakia. Total GHG emissions excluding emissions and removals from LULUCF decreased by 36.9 per cent and 38.7 per cent including LULUCF, between the base year and 2011. Emission decreases were driven by decreases in industrial output and structural changes in the economy, caused by the transition from a centrally planned to a market-driven economy. Across the EU, it is expected that the use of market mechanism under the EU ETS will guarantee that emissions from sectors falling under this scheme (mainly large point sources such as power plants and industrial facilities) will achieve the 2020 target. In accordance with the EU ESD, the country-specific target for Slovakia is to limit emission growth to 13 per cent above the 2005 level by 2020. In the 'with measures' scenario, the projected total emissions (including both EU ETS and non-ETS sectors) are 12.1 per cent below the 2005 level by 2020, and in the 'with additional measures' scenario, the projected emissions are 16.4 per cent below the 2005 level by 2020. The ERT noted that the reporting of projected emissions for the EU ETS and non-ETS sectors separately could improve the transparency of information and enable an assessment by the ERT of Slovakia's progress towards its emission reduction target; the ERT encourages the Party to include disaggregated data in its next NC submission.

21. In its BR1, Slovakia did not include information on the domestic arrangements established for the process of the self-assessment of compliance with emission reductions in comparison with emission reduction commitments or the level of emission reductions that is required by science, or on the progress made in the establishment of national rules for taking local action against domestic non-compliance with emission reduction targets. Slovakia provided to the ERT during the review the relevant associated information. The ERT recommends that Slovakia include in its next biennial report the information on changes in domestic institutional arrangements used for domestic compliance and the evaluation of the progress towards its economy-wide emission reduction target.

1. Mitigation actions and their effects

22. Slovakia has provided in its BR1 comprehensive information on its package of mitigation actions introduced to achieve its target. The BR1 provided information on mitigation actions organized by sector and partially by gas. A detailed review of the reported information is provided in chapter II.B of the IDR/NC6.

23. Slovakia reported in BR CTF table 3 on mitigation actions and their estimated effects in the achievement of its quantified economy-wide emission reduction target, listing several PaMs. However, information on effects is in an aggregated format and certain measures do not reflect each gas separately. The ERT recommends that Slovakia organize the reporting of mitigation actions by sector and by gas.

24. Most PaMs implemented by Slovakia are linked to the 2020 EU climate and energy targets and EU policies. The EU ETS was reported as one of the principal and most effective cross-sectoral policies and is targeted at emission reduction in the energy and industrial sectors.

25. Most of the estimated mitigation effect results from the main national policies: the National Renewable Energy Action Plan, aimed at increasing the share of renewable energy sources in electricity generation; the National Action Plan for Biomass Use, aimed at increasing the share of overall energy demand met by biomass; and the Action Plan for Energy Efficiency, aimed at increasing energy efficiency across the relevant sectors and

areas, especially in the residential and commercial sectors, with proposed financial and legal tools.

26. Slovakia reported that one of the biggest mitigation effects in the energy sector is estimated to result from the implementation of carbon dioxide capture and storage in the geological environment. However, given that carbon dioxide capture and storage technology is not commercially implemented and very expensive, the ERT considers that its effect by 2020 seems to have been rather overestimated. The ERT encourages Slovakia to elaborate on the methodology used to assess the effects of carbon capture and storage technologies.

27. Table 2 provides a concise summary of the key mitigation actions implemented by Slovakia to achieve its target.

Table 2
Summary of information on mitigation actions reported by Slovakia

Sectors affected	*List of key policies and measures*	*Estimate of mitigation impact (kt CO_2 eq)*
Policy framework and cross-sectoral measures		
	Act No. 414/2012 Coll. on Emission Trading and its amendments	221.1
Energy	Act No. 258/2011Coll. on Carbon Dioxide Capture and Geological Storage in the Geological Environment	1 646.5
Energy supply	National Action Plan for Biomass Use, Government Resolution No. 130/2008	1 865.4
	National Energy Security Strategy	–
Renewable energy	National Renewable Energy Action Plan, Government Resolution No. 677/2010	950.4
Energy efficiency	Conception of Energy Efficiency of Buildings, Government Resolution No. 384/2008	760.15
Residential and commercial sectors	As above	
Transport	Government Regulation No. 242/2008 Coll. amending Government Regulation No. 583/2006 Coll. on technical requirements for reduction of emissions of pollutants from compression ignition engines and standard ignition engines driven by natural gas or liquefied petroleum gas	104.1
	Act No. 158/2011 on Support for Energy-Saving and Environmental Vehicles	536.7
Industrial sectors	Act No. 414/2012 Coll. on Emission Trading and its amendments	788.7
Agriculture	EU Common Agricultural Policy	531.3
	Government Ordinance No. 488/2010 Coll. on conditions for granting subsidies in agriculture through direct payments	
Forestry	The Rural Development Programme for 2014–2020	243.3

Sectors affected	*List of key policies and measures*	*Estimate of mitigation impact (kt CO_2 eq)*
Waste management	Act No. 409/2006 – complete text of Act No. 223/2001 on Waste	403.9

28. The main institution responsible for the development and implementation of national environmental policy, including the mitigation and adaptation measures to tackle climate change, is the Ministry of the Environment (MoE). Within MoE the Climate Change Department serves as the national focal point to the UNFCCC. There is also a special inter-ministerial body, the High Level Committee for Coordination of Climate Change Policy, which has a principal role in both the decision-making process and the process of the monitoring and evaluating adopted policies in respect of the fulfilment of Slovakia's international commitments. Within the committee there are two special working groups focused on adaptation and low-carbon strategy.

29. During the review, Slovakia provided additional information on the High Level Committee for Coordination of Climate Change Policy. One of the committee's activities is the preparation of the "Report on the Current State of Fulfilment of the International Climate Change Policy Commitments of the Slovak Republic", which is submitted to the Government annually, with the aim of providing a detailed analysis of current progress in the area of climate change. The report also contains a specific chapter comprising information on Slovakia's current state of compliance with its Kyoto Protocol emission reduction target during the first and second commitment periods.

30. Slovakia provided, to the extent possible, detailed information on the assessment of the economic and social consequences of its response measures. It concluded that there are no impacts on developing countries. The ERT encourages Slovakia to conduct an assessment to confirm whether there are any impacts and to provide a description of the assessment in its next biennial report.

2. Estimates of emission reductions and removals and the use of units from the market-based mechanisms and land use, land-use change and forestry

31. Slovakia reported in its BR1 and CTF table 4 on its plans to use market-based mechanisms under the Convention and other mechanisms and on the contribution from LULUCF. Table 3 illustrates how Slovakia reported on the use of units from market-based mechanisms and LULUCF to achieve its target.

32. In its BR1, Slovakia reported information on total GHG emissions excluding emissions and removals from the LULUCF sector, on emissions and removals from the LULUCF sector and on total GHG emissions including emissions and removals from the LULUCF sector. For the first commitment period Slovakia has elected to account for LULUCF activities under Article 3, paragraph 3, of the Kyoto Protocol.

33. The number of emission reduction units (ERUs), certified emission reduction units (CERs) and assigned amount units (AAUs) used under the Kyoto Protocol flexible mechanisms are reported. Additional information on the use of the Kyoto Protocol flexible mechanisms is included in chapter II.C of the IDR/NC6. Table 3 illustrates how Slovakia reported on the use of units from market-based mechanisms and LULUCF to achieve its target, in its BR1 and during the review.

Table 3

Summary information on the use of units from the market-based mechanisms and land use, land-use change and forestry as part of the reporting on the progress made towards achievement of the target by Slovakia

Year	*Emissions excluding LULUCF (kt CO_2 eq)*	*LULUCF[a] emissions/removals (kt CO_2 eq)*	*Emissions including LULUCF (kt CO_2 eq)*	*Use of units from the market-based mechanisms[b] (kt CO_2 eq)*
Base year	71 781.85	NA	NA	0
1990[c]	NA	NA	NA	0
2010	45 896.36	NA	NA	0
2011	45 296.96	NA	NA	0
2012	NA	NA	NA	0

Abbreviations: LULUCF = land use, land-use change and forestry, NA = not applicable.

[a] Slovakia, in its biennial report common tabular format (BR CTF) table 4, reported a contribution from the LULUCF sector of –10,019.11 kt carbon dioxide equivalent (CO_2 eq) in the base year, –6,915.13 kt CO_2 eq in 2010 and –7,467.26 kt CO_2 eq in 2011 as part of the information on its progress towards the target. The expert review team did not include these values in the above table as the Party is a member State of the European Union, which has a joint commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 20 per cent by 2020 compared with 1990 that does not include emissions/removals from LULUCF.

[b] Slovakia, in its BR CTF table 4 reported the following numbers for the use of market-based mechanisms: for 2011 it reported 22,193 CO_2 eq. and for 2012 22,373 CO_2 eq. These figures represent a sum of assigned amount units, emission reduction units and certified emission reduction units as reported in BR CTF table 4b. To reach its target for the first commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol, 2008-2012, Slovakia is not planning to use the units from market-based mechanisms. For transparency reasons, a zero is presented in this table.

[c] Emissions and removals for 1990 shall be reported, if a base year other than 1990 is used.

3. Projections

34. Slovakia has provided in its BR1 comprehensive and well-organized information on its updated projections for 2020 and 2030. A detailed review of the reported information is provided in chapter II.C of the IDR/NC6.

35. In BR CTF table 5 data on key variables and assumptions used in the projections analysis are included. In BR CTF tables 6(a) and 6(c) projections data associated with the 'with measures' and 'with additional measures' scenarios are included. The ERT noted that in the main text of the BR1 the Party provided data on the 'without measures' scenario, but that BR CTF table 6(b) was not filled in with those data. The ERT encourages Slovakia to include data on the 'without measures' scenario in BR CTF table 6(b) in its next biennial report.

36. Slovakia provided information in the main text of its NC6 on the changes since the NC5 in the methodologies used for the preparation of the projections. Additional information on the calculation of the GHG projections, including on associated changes, is included in chapter II.C of the IDR/NC6.

37. The ERT noted the information reported by Slovakia on projected emission trends by 2030. According to the reported information, the projected emission level is 38.25 per cent below the base year level by 2020 under the 'with measures' scenario, while the EU target is 20 per cent below the base year level.

D. Provision of financial, technological and capacity-building support to developing country Parties

38. Slovakia is a Party not included in Annex II to the Convention and is therefore not obliged to report on the provision of financial, technological and capacity-building support to developing country Parties. However, its BR1 and CTF tables did include some relevant information on the provision of financial support to developing country Parties. The ERT assessed this information and its findings are reflected in this report. The ERT commends Slovakia for reporting this information.

Provision of support to developing country Parties

39. In its BR1, Slovakia provided information, by referring to its NC6, on what "new and additional" financial resources it has provided, but it did not clarify how it has determined such resources as being "new and additional". Slovakia described how it uses both multilateral and bilateral channels to finance capacity-building projects in the area of adaptation and mitigation within Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention. Slovakia has provided detailed information on the assistance that it has made available to developing country Parties that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change. Financed projects include climate change adaptation, GHG mitigation, and support and capacity-building projects regarding water, waste management, agriculture, food security, afforestation and renewable energy. Over 30 projects have been implemented, mainly through bilateral cooperation, and to the amount of EUR 8.5 million that has been committed for the period 2009–2013. Further, Slovakia has provided information on other financial resources related to the implementation of the Convention provided through bilateral, regional and other multilateral channels. Slovakia has also provided information on its financial contribution to the Adaptation Fund, established in accordance with decision 10/CP.7 which varied from USD 157,605 in 2009 to USD 765,450 in 2012. CTF table 7 summarizes information on financial resources and technology transfer.

40. Table 4 includes some of the information reported by Slovakia on its provision of financial support as reported in its CTF tables 7, 7a and 7b.

Table 4
Summary of information on provision of financial support in 2011–2012
(United States dollars)

	Years of disbursement	
Allocation channel of public financial support	*2011*	*2012*
Contributions through multilateral channels	360 450	783 000
Contributions through bilateral and regional channels and others	2 119 866	4 307 077

III. Conclusions

41. The ERT conducted a technical review of the information reported in the BR1 and CTF tables of Slovakia in accordance with the UNFCCC reporting guidelines on BRs. The ERT concludes that the BR1 and CTF tables provide a good general overview of information on: emissions and removals related to the quantified economy-wide emission reduction target, as well as a description of the target; progress made by Slovakia towards achieving its target; and the provision of support to developing country Parties. During the review, Slovakia provided additional information, including on domestic institutional

arrangements used for domestic compliance and evaluation of the progress towards its economy-wide emission reduction target.

42. Slovakia's emissions and removals related to the target for 2011 were estimated to be 36.9 per cent below its 1990 level excluding LULUCF and 38.8 per cent below including LULUCF. Emission decreases were driven by the decrease in industrial output and structural changes in the economy, caused by the transition from a centrally planned to a market-driven economy.

43. Slovakia is committed to achieving a joint EU quantified economy-wide target to achieve a 20.0 per cent reduction in emissions by 2020 compared with the 1990 (base year) level. The target for the EU and its member States will be achieved through the EU 2020 climate and energy package. Among the key PaMs in this package are the EU ETS and the EU ESD. The EU and its member States also presented a conditional offer to move to a 30 per cent emission reduction target. Emissions and removals from the LULUCF sector are not included in the quantified economy-wide target.

44. Across the EU, it is expected that the EU ETS will guarantee that sectors falling under this scheme (mainly large point sources such as power plants and industrial facilities) will achieve a 21.0 per cent emission reduction compared with 2005 by 2020. For the non-ETS sectors, through the EU ESD, the 2020 EU target has been translated to a limit of emission growth to 13.0 per cent (compared with 2005) for Slovakia.

45. The projected reductions in GHG emissions by 2020 in relation to the base year under the baseline scenario, the 'with measures' scenario and the 'with additional measures' scenario are 30.9, 38.3 and 41.3 per cent, respectively. The projected reductions in GHG emissions by 2030 in relation to the base year under the baseline scenario, the 'with measures' scenario and the 'with additional measures' scenario are 27.8, 37.1 and 40.4 per cent, respectively. In the 'with measures' and 'with additional measures' scenarios, the projected total emissions (including both EU ETS and non-ETS sectors) are 12.1 and 16.4 per cent, respectively, below the 2005 level by 2020, compared with the limit of emission growth of 13 per cent. The ERT noted that the reporting of projected emissions for the EU ETS and non-ETS sectors separately could improve the transparency of information and enable an assessment by the ERT of Slovakia's progress towards its emission reduction target.

46. Slovakia has implemented PaMs in all sectors, most of which are linked to the 2020 EU climate and energy targets and EU policies. The EU ETS was reported as one of the most effective cross-sectoral policies. The Party's main national PaMs are: the National Renewable Energy Action Plan, aimed at increasing the share of renewable energy sources in electricity generation; the National Action Plan for Biomass Use, aimed at increasing the share of overall energy demand met by biomass; and the Action Plan for Energy Efficiency, aimed at increasing energy efficiency across the relevant sectors and areas with proposed financial and legal tools.

47. In the course of the review, the ERT formulated several recommendations relating to the completeness and transparency of Slovakia's reporting under the Convention. The key recommendations[3] are that Slovakia:

(a) Improve the completeness of its reporting by including in its next national communication information on changes in domestic institutional arrangements used for domestic compliance and evaluation of the progress towards its economy-wide emission reduction target;

[3] The recommendations are given in full in the relevant sections of this report.

(b) Improve the transparency of the reporting in its next biennial report by:

(i) Enhancing the information on domestic institutional arrangements used for domestic compliance and evaluation of the progress towards its economy-wide emission reduction target;

(ii) Including information on PaMs and projections for transport and energy separately;

(iii) Organizing the reporting of mitigation actions by sector and by gas.

Annex

Documents and information used during the review

A. Reference documents

"UNFCCC biennial reporting guidelines for developed country Parties". Annex to decision 2/CP.17.
Available at <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2011/cop17/eng/09a01.pdf#page=4>.

"Guidelines for the technical review of information reported under the Convention related to greenhouse gas inventories, biennial reports and national communications by Parties included in Annex I to the Convention". Annex to decision 23/CP.19.
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B. Additional information provided by the Party

Responses to questions during the review were received from Ms. Janka Szemesova (Slovak Hydrometeorological Institute), including additional material on updated policies and measures, greenhouse gas projections, the national registry and recent climate policy developments in Slovakia.